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21971 7590 03/31/2004

WILSON SONSINI GOODRICH & ROSATI
650 PAGE MILL ROAD
PALO ALTO, CA 943041050

EXAMINER	
CAPUTO, LISA M	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2876	

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2004

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/432,545	11/03/1999	MARK EASTON	4255-712	1224

TITLE OF INVENTION: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONTROLLING A PRODUCTION OPERATION USING PRINTED INFORMATION ON A COMPONENT TAPE

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE	PUBLICATION FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	$1330	$0	$1330	06/30/2004

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE REFLECTS A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE APPLIED IN THIS APPLICATION. THE PTOL-85B (OR AN EQUIVALENT) MUST BE RETURNED WITHIN THIS PERIOD EVEN IF NO FEE IS DUE OR THE APPLICATION WILL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:
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If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

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B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check the box below and enclose the PUBLICATION FEE and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

☐ Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL should be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Even if the fee(s) have already been paid, Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and returned. If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PTOL-85 (Rev. 11/03) Approved for use through 04/30/2004.

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Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
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I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)
(Signature)
(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/432,545	11/03/1999	MARK EASTON	4255-712	1224

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nonprovisional	NO	$1330	$0	$1330	06/30/2004

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
CAPUTO, LISA M	2876	235-462010

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.

☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. **Use of a Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed.

1 _____
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3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. Inclusion of assignee data is only appropriate when an assignment has been previously submitted to the USPTO or is being submitted under separate cover. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent); ☐ individual ☐ corporation or other private group entity ☐ government

4a. The following fee(s) are enclosed:

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(Authorized Signature) (Date)

NOTE; The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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Determination of Patent Term Extension under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)
(application filed after June 7, 1995 but prior to May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Extension is 0 day(s). Any patent to issue from the above-identified application will include an indication of the 0 day extension on the front page.

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Extension is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system (http://pair.uspto.gov).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (703) 305-1383. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at (703) 305-8283.

PTOL-85 (Rev. 11/03) Approved for use through 04/30/2004.

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/432,545	EASTON, MARK	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Lisa M Caputo	2876	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to *amendment filed 5 December 2003*.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are *1,4-14,18-24,26-31 and 33-37*.

3. ☒ The drawings filed on *03 November 1999 and 05 December 2003* are accepted by the Examiner.

4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
   a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
   (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
      1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
   (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

   Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date *031604* .
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Amendment

1. Receipt is acknowledged of the amendment and replacement drawings filed 5 December 2003.

Examiner's Amendment

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Paul Davis (Reg. No. 29,294) on 16 March 2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling a production operation, comprising: electronically reading printed information from at least one component tape at intervals along the at least one component tape, wherein the printed information includes a count of at least one electronic component, the count indicating a position of the at least one electronic on the component tape; and automatically controlling at least one production device using the printed information by~~,~~ verifying a correct production set-up, wherein the step of verifying a correct production set-up includes verifying components of at least one production position by accessing a component database, verifying equivalent components of the at least one production position from an alternative component database, ~~and~~ verifying that at least one rule is satisfied using a rule database, and inhibiting production upon detection of an incorrect production set-up.

2-3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~2~~ 1, further comprising verifying that at least one rule is satisfied using the printed information.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing at least one advance notice of when material will be exhausted for the at least one production position; tracking an inventory of the at least one electronic component using the printed information; controlling the inventory using the printed information; and generating production records using the printed information.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising transferring the electronically read printed information using a Radio Frequency Data Communications (RFDC) system.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
electronically reading printed feeder information off of at least one feeder; electronically identifying the at least one feeder; and determining that the at least one feeder is fit for operation using information of at least one feeder database.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the printed information further comprises at least one item selected from a group comprising part number, tolerance and value description, batch number, lot number, component manufacturer, and component vendor, and wherein the printing comprises at least one type selected from a group comprising alphanumeric characters and Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) technologies, and wherein the printing is produced using at least one method selected from a group comprising printing, ink jet printing, laser etching, and imaging.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the AIDC technologies comprise one-dimensional barcodes, two-dimensional barcodes, three-dimensional barcodes, composite symbology, and Reduced Space Symbology barcodes.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic reading comprises scanning and reading using at least one technology selected from a group comprising Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Optical Mark Recognition (OMR), Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR), infrared scanning, and machine vision, wherein the machine vision technology uses at least one vision subsystem selected from a group comprising linear imagers, laser imagers, and charge coupled device (CCD) cameras.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one cover tape of the at least one component tape.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one carrier tape of the at least one component tape.

13. (Currently Amended) A system for controlling a production operation, the system comprising at least one processor coupled to at least one memory device and at least one production device, the system capable of monitoring and controlling the production operation by: electronically reading printed information from at least one component tape at intervals along the at least one component tape, wherein the printed information includes a count of at least one electronic component, the count indicating a position of the at least one electronic component on the component tape; and automatically controlling at least one production device using the printed information by~~,~~ verifying a correct production set-up, wherein the step of verifying a correct production set-up includes verifying components of at least one production position by accessing a component database, verifying equivalent components of the at least one production position from an alternative component database, ~~and~~ verifying that at least one rule is satisfied using a rule database, and inhibiting production upon detection of an incorrect production set-up.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the system is further capable of monitoring and controlling the production operation by transferring the electronically read printed information using a Radio Frequency Data Communications (RFDC) system.

15.-17. (Cancelled).

18. (Original) The system of claim ~~15~~ 13, further comprising at least one feeder database, wherein automatically controlling includes electronically identifying at least one feeder and determining that the at least one feeder is fit for operation using the at least one feeder database.

19. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the system is further capable of monitoring and controlling the production operation by:
providing at least one advance notice of when material will be exhausted for the at least one production position; tracking an inventory of the at least one electronic component using the printed information; controlling the inventory using the printed information; and generating production records using the printed information.

20. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the printed information further comprises at least one item selected from a group comprising part number, tolerance and value description, batch number, lot number, component manufacturer, and component vendor, and wherein the printing comprises at least one type selected from a group comprising alphanumeric characters and

Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) technologies, and wherein the printing is produced using at least one method selected from a group comprising printing, ink jet printing, laser etching, and imaging.

21. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the AIDC technologies comprise one-two-dimensional barcodes, three-dimensional barcodes, composite dimensional barcodes,symbology, and Reduced Space Symbology barcodes, wherein the electronic reading comprises scanning and reading using at least one technology selected from a group comprising Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Optical Mark Recognition (OMR), Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR), infrared scanning, and machine vision, wherein the machine vision technology uses at least one vision subsystem selected from a group comprising linear imagers, laser imagers, and charge coupled device (CCD) cameras.

22. (Original) The system of claim 13, Wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one cover tape of the at least one component tape.

23. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one carrier tape of the at least one component tape.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing executable instructions which, when executed in a processing system, causes the system to control a production operation, the controlling comprising:
electronically reading printed information from at least one component tape at intervals along the at least one component tape, wherein the printed information includes a count of at least one electronic component, the count indicating a position of the at least one electronic component on the component tape; and
automatically controlling at least one production device using the printed information by~~,~~ verifying a correct production set-up, wherein the step of verifying a correct production set-up includes verifying components of at least one production position by accessing a component database, verifying equivalent components of the at least one production position from an alternative component database, ~~and~~ verifying that at least one rule is satisfied using a rule database, and inhibiting production upon detection of an incorrect production set-up.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein the controlling further comprises: providing at least one advance notice of when material will be exhausted for the at least one production position; tracking an inventory of the at least one electronic component using the printed information;

controlling the inventory using the printed information; and generating production records using the printed information.

27. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein the printed information further comprises at least one item selected from a group comprising part number, tolerance and value description, batch number, lot number, component manufacturer, and component vendor, and wherein the printing comprises at least one type selected from a group comprising alphanumeric characters and Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) technologies, and wherein the printing is produced using at least one method selected from a group comprising printing, ink jet printing, laser etching, and imaging.

28. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein the AIDC technologies comprise one-dimensional barcodes, two-dimensional barcodes, three-dimensional barcodes, composite symbology, and Reduced Space Symbology barcodes, wherein the electronic reading comprises scanning and reading using at least one technology selected from a group comprising Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Optical Mark Recognition (OMR), Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR), infrared scanning, and machine vision, wherein the machine vision technology uses at least one vision subsystem selected from a group comprising linear imagers, laser imagers, and charge coupled device (CCD) cameras.

29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one cover tape of the at least one component tape.

30. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one carrier tape of the at least one component tape.

31. (Currently Amended) An electromagnetic medium containing executable instruction which, when executed in a processing system, causes the system to control a production operation, the controlling comprising:
electronically reading printed information from at least one component tape at intervals along the at least one component tape, wherein the printed information includes a count of at least one electronic component, the count indicating a position of the at least one electronic component on the component tape; and automatically controlling at least one production device using the printed information by~~,~~ verifying a correct production set-up, wherein the step of verifying a correct production set-up includes verifying components of at least one production position by accessing a component database, verifying equivalent components of the at least one production position from an alternative component database, ~~and~~ verifying that at least one rule is satisfied using a rule

database, and inhibiting production upon detection of an incorrect production set-up.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Original) The electromagnetic medium of claim 31, wherein the controlling further comprises: providing at least one advance notice of when material will be exhausted for the at least one production position; tracking an inventory of the at least one electronic component using the printed information; controlling the inventory using the printed information; and generating production records using the printed information.

34. (Original) The electromagnetic medium of claim 31, wherein the printed information further comprises at least one item selected from a group comprising part number, tolerance and value description, batch number, lot number, component manufacturer, and component vendor, and wherein the printing comprises at least one type selected from a group comprising alphanumeric characters and Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) technologies, and wherein the printing is produced using at least one method selected from a group comprising printing, ink jet printing, laser etching, and imaging.

35. (Original) The electromagnetic medium of claim 31, wherein the AIDC technologies comprise one-dimensional barcodes, two-dimensional barcodes, three-dimensional barcodes, composite symbology, and Reduced Space Symbology barcodes, wherein the electronic reading comprises scanning and reading using at least one technology selected from a group comprising Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Optical Mark Recognition (OMR), Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR), infrared scanning, and machine vision, wherein the machine vision technology uses at least one vision subsystem selected from a group comprising linear imagers, laser imagers, and charge coupled device (CCD) cameras.

36. (Original) The electromagnetic medium of claim 31, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one cover tape of the at least one component tape.

37. (Original) The electromagnetic medium of claim 31, wherein electronically reading printed information comprises scanning and reading printed information on at least one carrier tape of the at least one component tape.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 1, 4-14, 18-24, 26-31, and 33-37 are allowed.

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The best prior art of record (Noyama) fails to specifically teach the limitations of the method, system, and apparatus that verify a correct production set-up by accessing a component database, an alternative component database, and a rule database in order to automatically control a production device and inhibit production if an incorrect set-up is detected.

Hence, the best prior art of record fails to teach the specific arrangement of the components of the invention as set forth in claims 1, 4-14, 18-24, 26-31, and 33-37 and the examiner can find no teaching of the specific method, system, and apparatus, nor reasons within the cited prior art or on her own to combine the elements of these references other than the applicant's own reasoning to fully encompass the current pending claims. In addition, see applicant's reasoning in amendment/response filed 5 December 2003.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: U.S. Patent No. 6,341,726 to Castanedo et al. which teaches an apparatus for inspecting elements on a transport device.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ***Lisa M. Caputo*** whose telephone number is **(571) 272-2388**. The examiner can normally be reached between the hours of

8:30AM to 5:00PM Monday through Friday. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Lee can be reached at **(571) 272-2398.** The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

Communications via Internet e-mail regarding this application, other than those under 35 U.S.C. 132 or which otherwise require a signature, may be used by the applicant and should be addressed to [**lisa.caputo@uspto.gov**].

All Internet e-mail communications will be made of record in the application file. PTO employees do not engage in Internet communications where there exists a possibility that sensitive information could be identified or exchanged unless the record includes a properly signed express waiver of the confidentiality requirements of 35 U.S.C. 122. This is more clearly set forth in the Interim Internet Usage Policy published in the Official Gazette of the Patent and Trademark on February 25, 1997 at 1195 OG 89.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

LMC
March 17, 2004

DIANE I. LEE
PRIMARY EXAMINER